

Leigh Academy Molehill School Uniform Policy

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1.Aims

School uniform plays a vital role in fostering a positive school environment by:

- **Promoting ethos and identity:** Creating a sense of belonging and shared identity amongst students.
- **Setting an appropriate tone for education:** Reinforcing the focus on learning and academic achievement.
- **Encouraging equality and inclusion:** Reducing social disparities and promoting a level playing field for all students, regardless of background. By establishing a common identity, school uniform can act as a social leveller, mitigating the impact of socioeconomic differences.

- **Minimizing distractions and peer pressure:** Reducing bullying and peer pressure related to fashion trends or expensive clothing.

However, it is crucial to ensure that uniform policies are equitable and do not create undue hardship for families. Excessively expensive uniforms can pose a significant financial burden, potentially undermining the benefits of a uniform by creating a visible distinction between those who can afford it and those who cannot. This can negatively impact student attendance, access, and participation, and may contribute to bullying.

2. Statutory Guidance and Legal Considerations

This policy is developed and implemented with due regard to the following:

- **Department for Education Statutory Guidance:** The guidance issued in November 2021 on the cost of school uniforms for academy trusts has been carefully considered to ensure affordability and accessibility.
- **Human Rights Act 1998:** The fundamental rights and freedoms of students are respected and upheld.
- **Equality Act 2010:** This policy aims to prevent unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all students.
- **Safeguarding Requirements:** The safety and well-being of students are paramount in all aspects of the uniform policy.
- **Health and Safety of Pupils:** Uniform requirements are considered in relation to the health and safety of students in various school activities.

3. Human Rights, Equality, and Discrimination Considerations

We are committed to ensuring that our uniform policy is fair and inclusive, respecting the rights and diverse backgrounds of our students. In making decisions about the uniform policy, we have carefully considered our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. We have assessed the potential impact of the policy on pupils who share a protected characteristic, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The relevant protected characteristics considered in the development and implementation of this policy include:

- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy

4. Religion or Beliefs

We recognise that some religions and beliefs have specific dress requirements or practices. These may include adhering to modesty guidelines, or maintaining specific hairstyles. We are committed to

respecting the right of pupils to manifest their religion or belief, within the bounds of reason and practicality.

While students have the right to manifest their religion or belief, this right is not absolute and may be subject to limitations in certain circumstances. Restrictions may be justified if they serve a legitimate purpose, such as promoting cohesion and good order within the school, or addressing genuine health and safety or security concerns. Any such restrictions will be proportionate and non-discriminatory.

We will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races, and religions and will act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising essential academy policies related to safety or discipline. We encourage open communication with parents and students regarding any specific religious or cultural considerations related to the uniform.

5. Discrimination

Our aim is to create a uniform policy that is as inclusive as possible and avoids discriminating against students with particular protected characteristics.

- Where the academy specifies different uniform items for boys and girls, we ensure that the girls' uniform is not significantly more expensive than the boys' uniform, or vice versa, as this could constitute unlawful sex discrimination.
- We are committed to making reasonable adjustments, as appropriate, for pupils with disabilities to ensure they can comfortably and confidently wear the school uniform. This may include flexibility in uniform items or allowing for adaptations to existing items.

6. Cost Considerations

We are mindful of the potential financial burden that school uniforms can place on families. We are committed to ensuring that our uniform is affordable and does not prevent any student from attending our academy due to cost.

- No item of the school uniform will be so expensive as to deter pupils or their families from applying to or attending the academy due to financial constraints.
- The jumper or cardigan, which features the academy logo, is the only mandatory branded item and can be purchased through our designated supplier, Brigade.
- All other uniform items, such as trousers, skirts, pinafore dresses, polo shirts, and socks, can be purchased from any school uniform retailer of your choice, offering families greater flexibility and choice in terms of price and availability.

7. Uniform Expectations

Please find below the uniform expectations for Winter, Summer, and Physical Education (PE).

Winter Uniform:

- Navy Jumper or Cardigan with branded logo (available from Brigade)
- Grey Trousers
- Grey Skirt or Pinafore Dress
- White Polo Shirt
- Grey, Black, or White Socks
- Girls: Grey Tights (optional)
- Black leather shoes, fully enclosed
- Wellington Boots (for outdoor use as needed)
- Navy book bag with branded logo and shoulder strap (available from Brigade)
- Water Bottle

Summer Uniform:

- Navy Jumper or Cardigan with branded logo (available from Brigade)
- Grey Trousers, or
- Girls: Summer Dress or
- Boys: Grey Shorts
- White Polo Shirt
- Grey, White, or Black Socks
- Black leather shoes, fully enclosed
- Navy book bag with branded logo and shoulder strap (available from Brigade)
- Water Bottle

PE Uniform

- P.E. T-shirt (colour determined by House Colour)
 - Navy or Black Shorts
 - Grey, Black or White Socks
 - Sports Trainers
 - Navy or Black Tracksuit
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8. Ordering the Uniform

Parents can purchase the branded jumper or cardigan and book bag from our uniform supplier, Brigade. Details on how to order are available on the academy website and from the school office.

We understand that some families may face financial challenges. For those experiencing difficulties with the cost of the uniform, we offer support through payment plans or one-off contributions.

Please apply in writing to the Academy using the email address: info@molehill.latrust.org.uk, outlining your circumstances. All applications will be treated with discretion and sensitivity.

We also operate a second-hand uniform service, offering pre-loved uniform items at a reduced cost. These items are available upon request and are frequently sold at parent events. We encourage families to consider this sustainable and cost-effective option.

9. Jewellery

To ensure the safety of all students and minimize the risk of accidents, the following guidelines regarding jewellery are in place:

- Children are generally not permitted to wear jewellery in school.
- If a child wears a watch, it is their responsibility to look after it throughout the school day. The academy cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage.
- Small 'stud' earrings are acceptable for children. However, these must be removed for PE lessons.
- We are unable to store jewellery securely during PE lessons and strongly recommend that earrings and other jewellery are left at home on PE days.
- Academy staff are not permitted to remove or assist with replacing stud earrings.

10. Other Accessories

We believe that maintaining a focused learning environment is important. Therefore, we request that the following items are reserved for weekends and holidays:

- Nail varnish or false nails
- Temporary tattoos
- Make-up
- Coloured hair (including temporary dyes)
- Extreme hairstyles that may be distracting

Hairbands should be blue and should not be embellished with bows, glitter, flowers, or other decorative items. This helps maintain a consistent and simple appearance.

11. Naming Clothing and Property

To help us return lost items to their owners, please ensure that **ALL** clothing and personal property, including shoes, bags, and water bottles, are clearly marked with your child's name. The academy cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage of pupils' property and valuables.